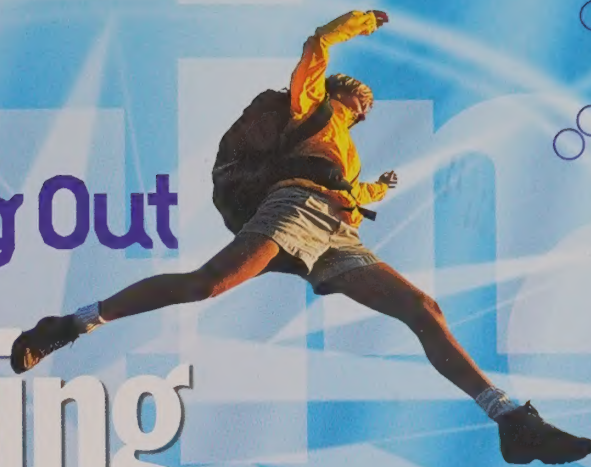


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Government
Publications

Setting Out

Choosing your course for life after high school





This brochure is one of three resources for Ontario secondary school students. The others are:

- *Setting Out: Supporting Your Choice for Postsecondary Education*
- *Setting Out: The Double Cohort and You*

Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant : *Un bon départ : Choisir le chemin à prendre après l'école secondaire.*

This publication is available on the website of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>.

Setting Out

**Choosing your
course for life
after high school**



Next steps

after high school



You've spent your high school years exploring new ideas and widening your understanding of the range of career and study choices available to you. Now it's almost time to decide what you'd like to do in the future – and your timing couldn't be better!

Whether you're planning to go to work, take an apprenticeship, or continue your education at university or college, the choices, opportunities, and outlook for Ontario graduates haven't been this good for 40 years.

Ontario's economy is strong, dynamic, and diverse. That means there are new job opportunities in virtually every sector of the economy and new opportunities in education and training. And young people with a postsecondary education are increasingly in demand.

At the same time, the "baby boomer" generation is beginning to retire.

Students know this. That's why they're applying to colleges and universities in record numbers, a trend that will continue well into the 21st century.

That's also why the Ontario government has embarked on the single largest expansion of our college and university system in more than 30 years. The government and its partners are investing \$2.2 billion to build facilities and are honouring a multi-year funding commitment to attract the best professors and researchers in the world. The government is also continuing to

improve Ontario's training system and to expand the apprenticeship model into new skill areas.

Because many of these developments were anticipated several years ago, the government began phasing in a more specialized and concentrated high school program in 1999, aimed at better preparing students for life in our fast changing world.

You are among the first Ontario students to benefit from all of these changes. And you're ready now to move on to the next level in your education – whether it is on the job or in the classroom.

This guide will help you make informed choices and decisions. It deals with some frequently asked questions, and provides information on advancing your skills after high school, finding work, and training on the job.

More space and choice for students

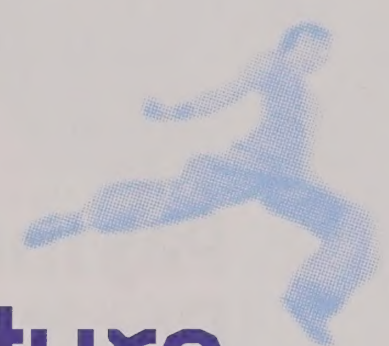

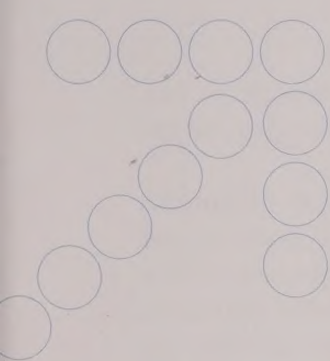
*...the new face of
postsecondary education is
about more than creating
new spaces – it's also about
giving students a
wider range of choices*



You're one of a growing number of high school students who are choosing a postsecondary education as the next step after high school.

To prepare for this increasing demand, in 1999 the Ontario government launched the single largest capital construction project on campuses in more than 40 years. With an investment to date of \$2.2 billion, the government and its partners are funding many SuperBuild projects at colleges and universities across Ontario, adding about 79,000 new student spaces to campuses across the province.

Since SuperBuild was established, Ontario has provided hundreds of millions of dollars to modernize and renew existing buildings, allowing colleges and universities to create another 36,000 spaces. On top



today and in the future

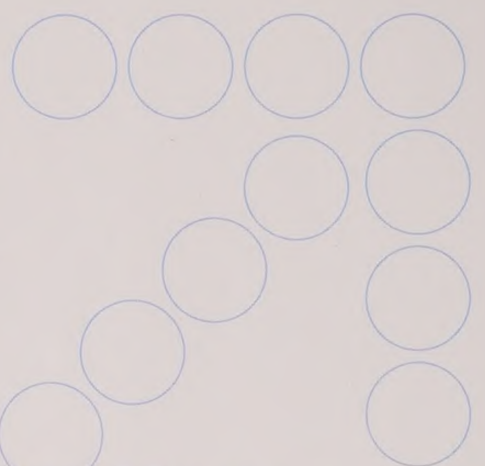
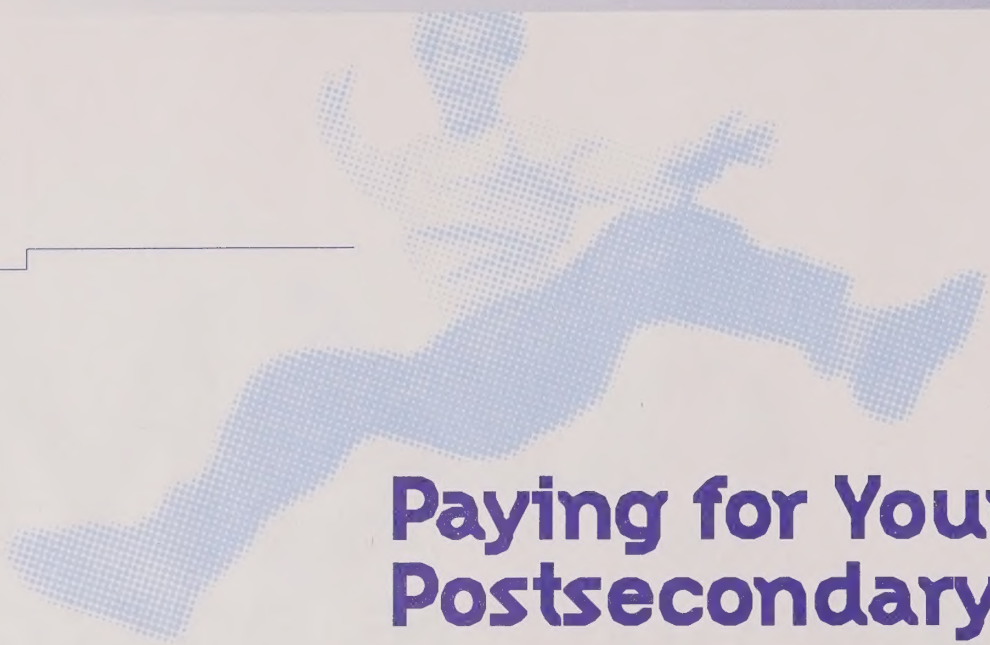
of that, new capital projects are under way, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology has been established, and the government has announced it will continue to invest in new student spaces at postsecondary campuses.

This investment began as part of the plan to prepare for students in the “double cohort”, and it has launched Ontario’s colleges and universities into the 21st century with the strengthened and expanded campuses that will meet the needs of students for years to come.


But the new face of postsecondary education is about more than creating new spaces – it’s also about giving students a wider range of choices. Ontario’s colleges are now offering applied degrees that provide the mix of theory and hands-on learning

that is required in today’s “high tech” workplace. Colleges and universities across the province are offering joint programs that allow students to take a combination of college- and university-level courses leading to one degree.

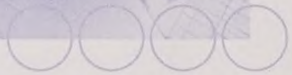
So the spaces are there and the choices are increasing. Now, it’s up to you. If you’re willing and qualified, there’s a world of opportunity ready for you.



Paying for Your Postsecondary Education



It can cost more than \$10,000 a year, including tuition and room and board, to attend college or university in Ontario. That's a big expense. But it's also one of the best investments you'll ever make – an investment in yourself.



You can finance your postsecondary education through a combination of your own savings and income; bursaries, scholarships, and grants; and federal and provincial student

loans. Here are some sources of funds available to you.

To begin with, you can apply for loans and grants from both the Ontario and federal governments, using the application form on the **Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)** website, at <http://osap.gov.on.ca>. The two student loan programs have been integrated into one, so you only have to deal with one application, one loan,

and one administration. Each year, approximately 160,000 Ontario students are helped financially through the Ontario program.

When you apply for OSAP, you are automatically considered for a Canada–Ontario Integrated Student Loan; a Canada Study Grant for Students with Dependants and/or a Canada Millennium Bursary; an Ontario Aiming for the Top Tuition Scholarship;

and an Ontario Student Opportunity Grant.

Aiming for the Top, which was established in 2000, is one of the newer scholarship programs. More than 8,000 scholarships were awarded in its second year. When the program is fully implemented, more than \$35 million will be invested each year through these scholarships. The Ontario government has established this, and a number of permanent trusts, to help up to 400,000 students in need over 10 years.

The **Ontario Student Opportunity Grant (OSOG)** is available to help students reduce their annual Canada-Ontario Integrated Student Loan. Upon graduation, students have to repay only the first \$7,000 of their Canada

and Ontario student loans for each two-term academic year. The amount exceeding \$7,000 for each year is covered by OSOG. Students are kept up to date on how much they owe.

Until recently, students feared that tuition fees could increase dramatically in any given year, to the point that they would be unable to complete their courses of study. To ensure that students know with some certainty what their education will cost and can plan accordingly, **the Ontario government capped tuition increases** at two per cent a year for each of the five years from 2000–2001 to 2004–2005.

Financial assistance is also available through the institution you plan to attend. Every public university and college

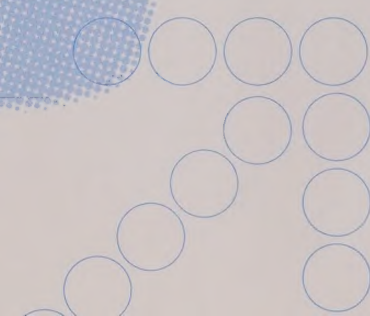
in Ontario has a **student financial aid office**. Get in touch and find out about the scholarships, grants, and bursaries that are offered. Universities are obliged to set aside 30 per cent of tuition-fee increases to ensure that there is adequate financial help for students who need it.

You should also check with **corporations and community-based agencies** that supply bursaries and scholarships on the basis of merit and/or a specific field of study.

OSAP allows students in a typical two-term study period to receive a certain amount of money from part-time work and bursaries and/or scholarships, in addition to any money they receive through OSAP. Until recently, a student could only earn

and/or receive in bursaries \$600 without a reduction in assistance provided by the province. Today, **OSAP exemptions** are more generous: a student can receive up to \$1,700 in earnings and bursaries without a reduction in assistance. If the student is receiving a scholarship, the maximum total exemption for study-period income is \$3,500, including a maximum of \$1,700 in earnings and bursaries.

More detailed information is available in *Setting Out: Supporting Your Choice for Postsecondary Education*.



Frequently Asked Questions

Are there enough places for all the students applying to university and college?

The Ontario government is committed to ensuring that every willing and qualified Ontario student will have a place in the postsecondary education system.

Through SuperBuild, Ontario's infrastructure program, the provincial government and its partners have invested billions of dollars in campuses across the province to create about 79,000 new student spaces.

Is accommodation in residence available?

Yes, universities and colleges are building new residences to help meet the need for accommodation. By 2003, the number of residence beds available is expected to increase by 16,229. That's an increase of more than a third over the number of residence beds available at the end of the 1990s.

Will graduates of the five-year high school program and graduates of the four-year program be considered equally?

The universities and the government are committed to the principle that, regardless of students' program of studies, or when they entered high school, students' chances of gaining admission to university will be the same.

How many institutions should I apply to?

When you apply to university through the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (www.ouac.on.ca), you may specify up to three programs at one institution, or one program at each of three institutions. For an additional fee, you may apply to more. Some students are applying to as many as five institutions. When you apply to college through the Ontario College Application Services (www.ocas.on.ca), you may choose up to five programs.

Are institutions reducing the number of foreign or out-of-province students they accept to make sure there's room for Ontario students?

It's up to the individual institutions to decide which students they will accept. Most say they will continue to consider applications from other provinces and countries in order to admit the students most likely to succeed in their studies.

Should I apply for the Aiming for the Top scholarship?

If you have good marks, you should apply for this scholarship by using the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) application for full-time students. Every year, deadlines are identified in the publication entitled *Update: Aiming for the Top Tuition Scholarships*, which is available on the ministry's website, at www.edu.gov.on.ca.

How long will the cap on tuition-fee increases last?

The cap – two per cent per year – remains in effect through the 2004–2005 academic year.



When **Your** next stop is the workplace...

Choosing your course for life after high school

About 50 per cent of all students entering Grade 9 in any year go directly into the labour force after high school. If you're considering this, you should know that Ontario's new secondary school curriculum, introduced in September 1999, ensures that **you are better prepared for the world of work than any generation before you.**

You've already begun to prepare in various ways for the workplace. You've taken classes in **career studies**. You may have also learned real-life lessons about work through **cooperative education** and **work experiences**; seen at first hand the reality of a job through **job shadowing** or **job twinning**; tested out different career possibilities; and discovered the potential of volunteer and non-profit work through **community involvement** activities.

You've probably participated in the **Passport to Prosperity** program in some way – for example, through mentoring and coaching, job shadowing, cooperative education, work experiences, apprenticeship opportunities, and school-work transition programs. This program was begun in 1999, and more than 5,000 employers in Ontario are involved (see www.edu.gov.on.ca/passport).

Your **Ontario Skills Passport** clearly defines the skills you need to enter the world of work – skills such as data analysis, problem solving, and teamwork. Your passport gives potential employers a standardized way to evaluate your achievements and put them on the record.

Now, you may want to take advantage of the **Job Connect** program (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/training/cepp/cepp.html) as you make specific

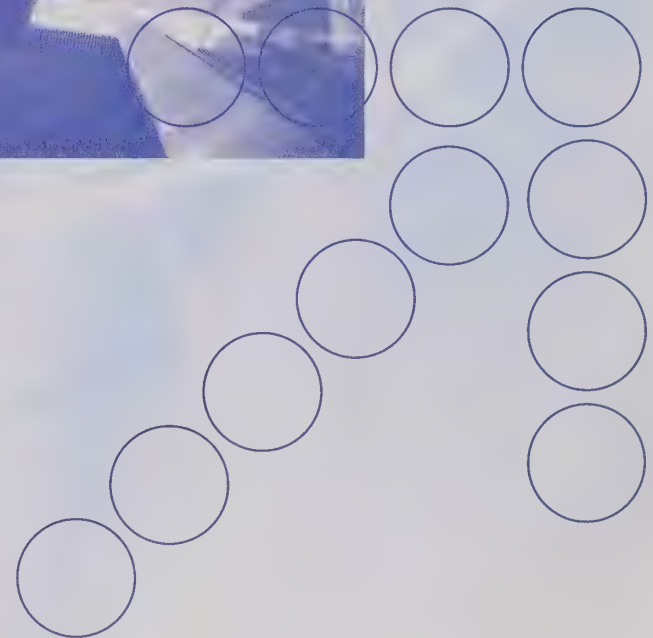
plans to enter the job market. Job Connect is Ontario's primary youth employment initiative. It offers you free information year round about labour market trends, advice on job searching, and placement with employers who are willing to train you.


Job Connect agencies also deliver services through Ontario Summer Jobs by helping students to find summer work or to create their own summer jobs through business start-up grants.

Job Connect has an impressive success rate: more than 80 per cent of clients go on either to a job or to additional education.

You can also get help in your **job search through the federal government**. Check Human Resources Development Canada (www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/common/home.shtml); **Youth Employment Information**, including the Youth Employment Strategy (www.youth.gc.ca/index_e.shtml); and **Jobs, Workers, Training & Careers** (www.jobsetc.ca/home_e.html).

You'll need a federal **Social Insurance Number (SIN)** to start work or receive government benefits in Canada. The SIN is a nine-digit identification number. Information on obtaining an SIN is available from Human Resources Development Canada, at www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/sin-nas.





Earning and learning through apprenticeship

Half of all students entering Grade 9 these days are preparing for postsecondary education, the other half for the world of work. If you're among those planning to go to work immediately after high school, there's a way to both earn a pay cheque and acquire job skills at the same time – apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship is a **practical method of learning specific work skills**. The apprentice observes a qualified journey-person performing skills on the job, practises the skills, and finally performs those skills himself or herself. An

apprenticeship is a real job that pays wages, which increase as you develop your skills. The province monitors your on-the-job training and certifies your qualifications when you complete your apprenticeship. More than

There are **two ways to do an apprenticeship**.

The **usual way** is to complete Grade 12 (with good marks in math, science, and English), then find a job with a qualified employer who is willing

An apprenticeship is a real job that pays wages, which increase as you develop your skills.

130 types of apprenticeships are available in four sectors: automotive, industrial, construction, and services.

to sponsor your apprenticeship. Apprenticeship takes from two to five years and includes a classroom component that

is delivered by a community college or private institution. You'll spend 80 to 90 per cent of your time on the job, and 10 to 20 per cent at school.

When you've finished your on-the-job and classroom training, you'll receive a Certificate of Apprenticeship, or you may write an exam that leads to a Certificate of Qualification as a journey-person in your trade.

Once you've completed your apprenticeship, you can continue to work for your employer at full wages. Your certification means that you are qualified to work anywhere in Ontario (and, in most cases, in other provinces).

The **second way** to complete an apprenticeship has the advantage of giving you a head start on your career at

an earlier age while you're still attending high school. (If you are a student in Grade 12 who has taken this route, you will already know at least some of what it entails.)

This way involves registering for **cooperative education and the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)**. OYAP allows students who have completed Grade 10, and who are at least 16 years old, to start their apprenticeships by working part-time while they continue to earn credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

In this program, students take the recommended technology, cooperative education, math, science, and English courses in school.

The program typically takes two years, and includes two

cooperative education placements that work as a "trial run" for both employer and student. You don't get paid, but employers have been known to offer their students paid summer jobs.

Once you graduate with your Ontario Secondary School Diploma, you move directly into full-time apprenticeship with your employer. You take the same college or other classroom training as other apprentices, and finish your training as a skilled worker qualified to earn full wages.

Apprenticeships are part of a well-paying job market.

Students benefit from the "earn while you learn" program, and employers get to select motivated workers who are eager to acquire skills that are in high demand.

Apprenticeships have the backing not only of employers but of the Ontario government, which is investing \$33 million by 2004–2005, including investments in OYAP, in order to double the number of entrants to apprenticeship programs.

To find out more, call **1-800-JOBGROW**, or visit the OYAP website, at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/training/apprenticeship/skills/oyap.html.



Excellent for graduates

In the end, is a postsecondary education worthwhile?
Will your education be of high quality? Will it prepare you
for work? Will employers agree?

Since 1998, the Ontario government has been measuring the success of university and college educations by surveying students, graduates, and graduates' employers. **Level of success is measured using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each institution.** The indicators tell, by program, what percentage of students graduated; how satisfied they were with the experience; what percentage of graduates are employed (six months and two years after graduating); how satisfied the employers are with

these employees; how satisfied undergraduates (students who are still attending the institution) are with their education so far; and what percentage of graduates are in default on their Ontario Student Loans.

The institutions' KPIs are factored into decisions about how much money to grant individual colleges and universities to operate their facilities. This is called **performance-based funding**. Only two provinces, Ontario and Alberta, measure and

reward the performance of postsecondary institutions in this way.

From their first year of measurement, KPIs have told quite a success story for Ontario's graduates.

Here are some data on university graduates for 1999:

- 94.4 per cent had a job within six months of leaving school
- 95.6 per cent were working within two years
- the average graduation rate for all Ontario universities was 73.7 per cent



Here are some data on college graduates for 2000–2001:

- 88.7 per cent were employed within six months of graduation
- 91.7 per cent of employers were satisfied with graduates
- 81.4 per cent of graduates were satisfied with their education

For the most up-to-date KPIs, check the Internet. You can find links to individual institutions and their KPIs on the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities website. For universities, look at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/postsec/uindicator.html. For colleges, look at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/postsec/colindicator.html.

It's worthwhile to **check out an institution's (and program's) KPIs** before applying to, and while attending, a postsecondary institution. Doing this can help you pinpoint employment trends and give you a sense of the quality of the educational experience other students have had at a specific university or college.



Work in the 21st century: You're always learning

New industries are being created and new tools and technologies are being invented all the time. People may make career changes during their working lives – not just changes of employers, but of the type of work they do. The reality of work in the 21st century is that continuing to learn is part of your job description – for life.

“**Lifelong learning**” means that you will always be able to step up to a better job. It means you won't be left behind. It means your skills will never become obsolete. It means your working life can last as long as you want.

The concept of lifelong learning has been around since the 1970s, but the means of making it a reality are only forming now. Technologies are being developed today that allow you to attend so-called **virtual classes** any time of the day or night, whenever it's convenient for you. Your instructor and classmates may be across town or halfway around the world – distance is no longer a barrier; the time and cost of travel no longer limit your choices. This flexible kind of learning system accommodates adult learners' work schedules and family responsibilities.

The technologies that make it possible include: multimedia learning materials, web-based communications technologies, and computer and telecommunications conferencing. Colleges, universities, training organizations, and the private sector are making programs interactive and available online.

So is the Ontario government. Through TVOntario's **E-Learning Division** (www.tvo.org), the province-wide public education broadcaster is providing technology-based training programs that were previously only available in classrooms or workplaces. These programs are developed with employers, industry organizations, unions, and educators.

Even more important than possessing specific skills is the ability and willingness to keep on learning. Ultimately, that will be your greatest skill – and perhaps the greatest asset you can bring to your job.



For More Information

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Mowat Block, 900 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2
(416) 325-2929 or 1-800-387-5514
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/welcome.html

SuperBuild

www.superbuild.gov.on.ca/english/collegesuniversity.html

Council of Ontario Universities

www.cou.on.ca

Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario

www.acaato.on.ca

Ontario Universities' Application Centre

www.ouac.on.ca

Ontario College Application Services

www.ocas.on.ca

Ontario Student Assistance Program

osap.gov.on.ca

Canada Student Loans Program

www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/student_loans/c/index_e.html

Passport to Prosperity

www.edu.gov.on.ca/passport

Job Connect

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/training/cepp/cepp.html

Apprenticeship and Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

1-888-JOBGROW

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/training/apprenticeship/skills/oyap.html

Training Hotline

1-800-387-5656

(416) 326-5656

Social Insurance Number

www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/sin-nas

University and College Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Universities:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/postsec/uindicator.html

Colleges:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/postsec/colindicator.html

Distance Learning Links

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/relsites/distance.html

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www.careermatters.tv.org



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